

Down
in
Porto
Rico
with a
Kodak

By James D. Dowell

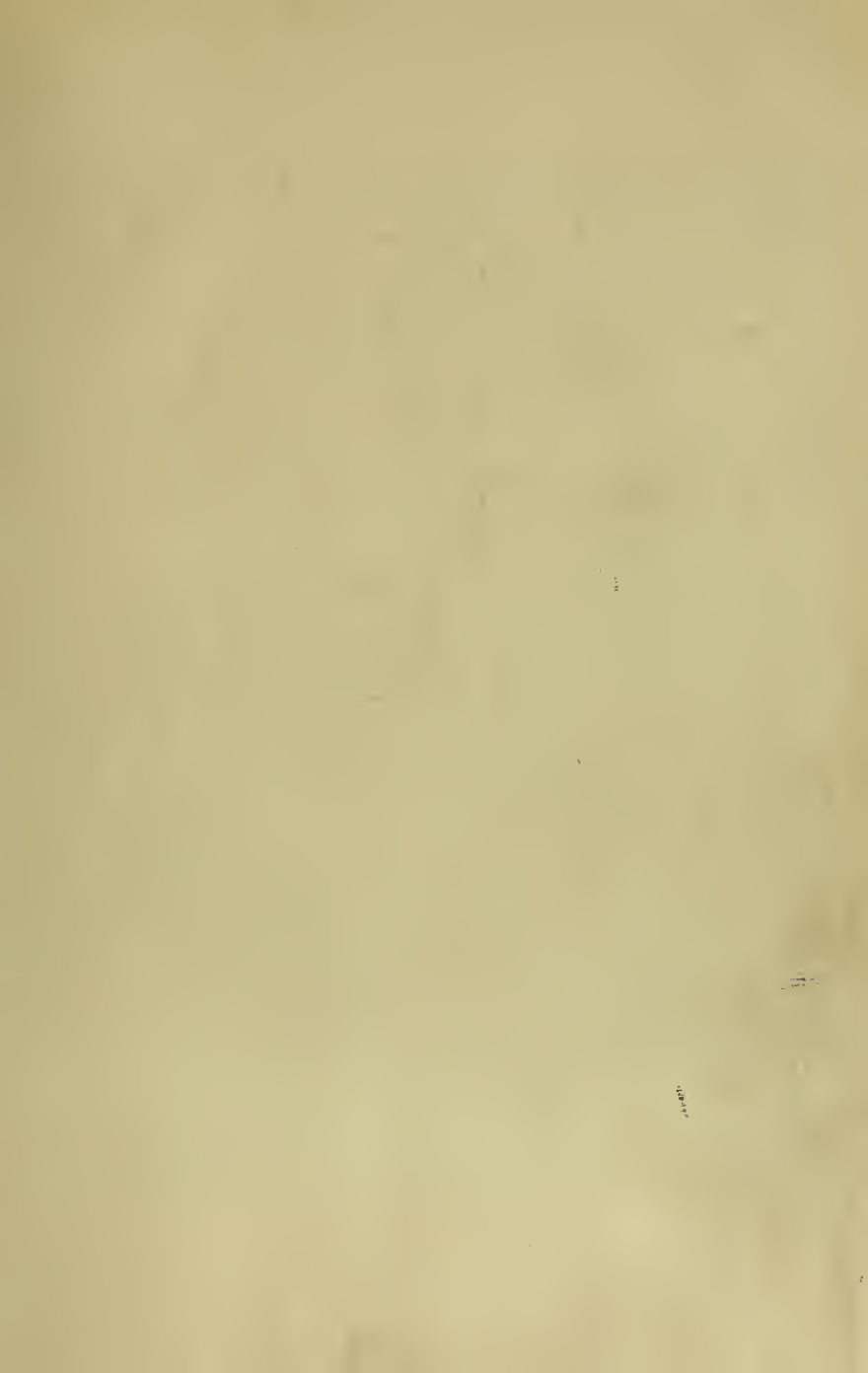


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Down in Porto Rico with a Kodak

By JAMES D. DEWELL

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TO MY FRIEND

Captain David Lloyd

OF THE STEAMSHIP ARKADIA

IN TOKEN OF HIS MANY ACTS OF KINDNESS

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED

PREFACE

On a recent business trip to the smallest and most easterly of the Greater Antilles, I took with me as a companion my old friend of Greenland days, an Eastman Kodak. A desire to conserve the views taken at the time in a more pleasing and permanent form than by photographic prints has induced the publication of this brief illustrated narrative of the Porto Rico of to-day. If the perusal of this little souvenir volume proves half as enjoyable to my friends as it has to me in its preparation, I shall feel more than repaid for my efforts.

J. D. D.

June 1, 1898.

CHAPTER I.

The sea is a jovial comrade,
He laughs wherever he goes ;
His merriment shines in the dimpling lines
That wrinkle his hale repose ;
He lays himself down at the foot of the sun,
And shakes all over with glee,
And the broad-backed billows fall faint on the shore,
In the mirth of the mighty sea.

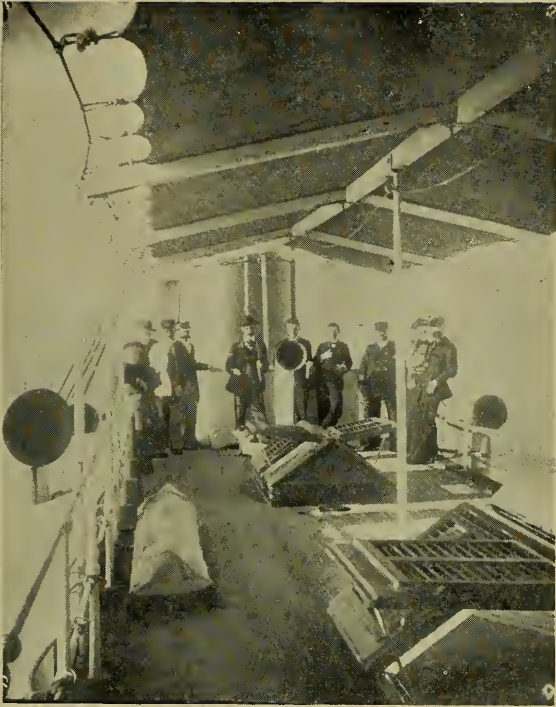
—*Bayard Taylor.*

FOR me the ocean has charms. Once I get well off shore, away from the smell of the land, freed from business cares, divorced from the perplexities of all the petty details and trials of every-day life, I am happy. My blood flows freer, appetite is keener, digestion more perfect ; everything is peaceful and refreshing, and the music of the wind to my ear far excels the best equipped orchestra. The rush and surge of the mighty waters is soul-satisfying. Too seldom do I find time to indulge my passion. Such an opportunity did present itself, however, in January last,

when a business engagement called me to the little island of Porto Rico.

It was a cloudy afternoon followed by light rain in early January, 1898, when I boarded the steamship *Arkadia*, of the New York & Porto Rico Steamship Line, en route for Porto Rico. Our voyage was uneventful. We passed out of the lower harbor after sundown. Our pilot left us when abreast of the new steam pilot-ship, which was patrolling the outer harbor. This was my first experience of the kind. As may be well known, the piloting in the past has been done from regular pilot sailboats, but they are passing away with the march of improvement, and the steam pilot-ship is taking their place.

The passenger list was light, which I learned is the usual case on the outward trip. The passage to Porto Rico is usually made via Havana; as all of the Spanish mail ships make Porto Rico to and from Havana, and as these steamers have much better accommodations, travel takes that route. Our few passengers were interesting to a degree, nevertheless. Four of them were young men,



On the Hurricane Deck at Sea, S. S. Arkadia.

Spanish Porto Ricans, three of them returning from a few months at school in the States, principally to obtain a knowledge of the English language.

My first snap shot was made on the voyage and represents a scene on the hurricane deck. I give it simply because it was my first, and perhaps interesting to the posers.



City of San Juan.

The weather nearly all of the time was very fine indeed ; our passage was made in less than six days.

The approach to the island was under the most favorable conditions, it being in the morning, with a gentle breeze, and the weather all that could be desired. As we passed Fort Morro quite a number of cameras were snapped



Battlement, San Juan, Ponce de Leon Palace in background.

at that ancient fortress. My effort in this was fairly successful.

The harbor of San Juan is the best one on the island and is very commodious and safe, being nearly land-locked. Before dropping anchor a snap at the city at long range developed a fairly good view, though not very distinct, owing to the great distance.

We go through the usual formalities after coming to anchor, to wit: the health officer

and custom officials put in their appearance; we were also visited by the agents of the steamship line and the United States Consul, Hon. Philip C. Hanna.



Governor General's Palace, San Juan.

The first business in order after going ashore was to visit the money changers, where I received \$85 Porto Rico money for \$50 American. Also, it is quite necessary to secure a change of clothing. Leaving the

States in the winter, naturally my clothing was too warm and burdensome for a tropical climate.

After getting the necessities we must find a good hostelry. The principal and only fair hotel in San Juan is the "Inglaterra," of which it has been well said, "There is nothing English about it but its name." No one in the house speaks English; not even the clerk of the hotel can understand a word, and as I could talk no Spanish it was not very easy getting on.



City Wall and Fortifications, San Juan.

CHAPTER II.

North of the Sea of the Caribbee,
And laved in the tropical flood,
Floats a beautiful isle in Moorish style,
But blighted, alas, by Spanish blood.

BEFORE proceeding with the account of my sight-seeing, a brief description of the island may be appropriate. Porto Rico, one of the Spanish West India islands, lies 70 miles east of Hayti in about 18° north latitude and 66° west longitude. It forms an irregular parallelogram about one hundred miles long and forty broad, and has an area of something over 3,500 square miles, or about three-quarters the size of Connecticut.

From east to west it is traversed by a range of hills, so situated that the streams flowing northward are much longer than those flowing southward. The highest district and the highest peak is El Yunque, 3,600 feet high, situated in the Sierra d'Loquilla range near the northeast corner.

As the hills intercept the northeast trade winds with their rain-clouds, there is sometimes almost a superabundance of moisture in the northern lowlands, whereas in the south



The Plaza, San Juan.

severe droughts occur and the land demands artificial irrigation, which is carried out with considerable enterprise in the vicinity of Ponce among the sugar estates.

The island is, however, reasonably well watered, many hundred streams being enumer-

ated, of which more than forty are considerable rivers, and its general appearance is very beautiful. A description of the interior will be given, following this, from observations made while taking a carriage drive from San Juan to Ponce (pronounced Ponsy).

Forests still cover all the higher parts of the hills, and the view to the traveler from the higher eminences is very pleasing to the eye. As one looks down into the valleys he is reminded of some sections of our own New



Wharf scene, San Juan.



S. S. Arkadia in the harbor of San Juan.

England, so far as landscape is considered. All else is quite different. The rude houses in the distance are simply thatches on poles. The better class of the inhabitants live in the villages or cities.

The two great staples of the island are sugar and coffee, though tobacco is fast becoming prominent as an article of commerce.

Besides the three articles named, there are grown on the island cotton, rice, corn, bananas and plantains, as well as oranges, cocoanuts and other tropical fruits. The rice (which is one of the chief foods of all classes) is a mountain variety, grown without flooding. However, so general is its use that much more is imported



Spanish War Ship Concha in harbor of San Juan.

than is home-grown. On the lowland pastures large herds of excellent cattle are reared for home use and for export to nearby islands. During the insurrection in Cuba large numbers were sent to that island, hence the troubles there have proved a benefit to Porto Rico.

In general, Porto Rico may be described as extremely fertile and its exports more than

double in value those of Jamaica, which island is about the same size as Porto Rico.

Formerly the tobacco was largely sent to Havana to be manufactured into cigars, as the Porto Ricans have not yet developed the



Harbor of San Juan.
Group of boats alongside S. S. Arkadia.

proper knowledge of either the growing of the best stock or of manufacturing the better grade of cigars. However, at the time of my visit the exportation to Havana had been prohibited, for what reason the Porto Ricans could not explain, but the supposition was



A Street in San Juan. Ancient Chapel in background.

that Governor Blanco wished to hold up the price of the Cuban product, which the importation from Porto Rico would lower.

The great need of the island is good roads and bridges, although the Government has done something in that line in recent years. With the exception of the Government road from the capital to Ponce (about 80 miles), most of the roads can be used only by ox teams or for horseback riding.

Gold, iron, copper, coal and salt are all found in Porto Rico, but the last alone is worked.

The island, which has been a possession of



Ancient Chapel, San Juan, side view.

Spain from its first discovery, was declared a province in 1870. It is divided into seven departments: Bayamon, near the northeast end of the island (containing the capital, San Juan Bautista and Toa-Alta, Toa-Baja, Naranjito, Vega-Alta, etc.); Arecibo (Arecibo, Hat-



A Street in San Juan.

illo Camuy, Quebradillas, etc.); Aguadilla (Aguadilla, Moca, Aguada Lares or San Sebastian); Mayaguez (Mayaguez, Anaico, San German); Ponce (Ponce, Guayanilla,



U. S. Consul Hanna and Wife, San Juan.
On the balcony of the Consulate.

Pennelas, Coamo); Humacao (Humacao, Naguabo, Luquillo); Guayama (Hato-Grande, Gurabo, etc.); and the island of Viequez (with the town of Isabel Segunda) is attached as an

eighth department and used as a military penal station.

The population at the present time is estimated at one million, though probably not



Section of Park showing grass thirty days from seeding, San Juan.

more than 900,000. There is still plenty of room for further expansion.

Among the people of European origin there are Spaniards, Germans, Swedes, Danes, Russians, Frenchmen, Chuetas or descendants of

Moorish Jews from Majorca, and natives of the Canary Islands. There are also a few Chinese.

The Gibaros, or small land-holders and day-laborers of the country districts, are a curious old Spanish stock modified by Indian blood.



Cayey.

CHAPTER III.

SAN JUAN BAUTISTA, or St. John's, the capital, lies in about 18° north latitude on the north coast, on a small island, connected with the main land by bridges. Before the days of modern warships it was



Cemetery, Cayey.

considered a place of great strength and was one of the principal walled cities of the West Indies.

The illustration, "A section of the city wall," will give an impression of its defences



A Wayside Inn between San Juan and Ponce.

from the land side. At the time of my visit a portion of this old wall was being torn down and from the grading a small park was created. To show the great fertility of the soil a view is shown of the little park with the grass thirty days from seeding.

In the old fort of Santa Catalina there is yet standing a palace erected by Ponce de Leon in

the early part of the sixteenth century, a cut of which is shown. The harbor, as previously explained, is one of the best in the West Indies, having a comparatively unobstructed entrance and along the wharves a depth at low water of ten to thirteen feet.



A halt in the Mountains between San Juan and Ponce.

Like most Spanish cities, the streets of San Juan are narrow. The over-hanging balconies from the houses on every side are prominent. In many streets the paving is of brick.

Some of the buildings have modern plumbing, furnished by water-works, but the system of sewage is in its infancy.

As a part of the ancient city wall fortification I succeeded in getting a good view of the old chapel near the United States Consulate. The chapel is yet used for its



Improved Highway.

original purpose. The building is quite small, as the view will show. The communicants who visit it for mass have to mass themselves in the streets and take their turn as they may.



Average roadway not improved.

A second view of this edifice is a front view showing the chapel in the background. It also represents one of the principal streets.

It was my good fortune, and pleasure as well, to meet United States Consul Hanna and wife at the Consulate, which is a small building at the end of the street adjoining the chapel. In this building the British Consulate have the ground floor and the United States the floor above.

I succeeded in obtaining a good picture of Mr. and Mrs. Hanna on the balcony of the Consulate by gaining admission to the house



Tropical Scenery.

on the opposite side, the street being so narrow that a range could not be obtained from the pavement.

Soon after my departure from the island Consul Hanna was obliged to temporarily vacate his post, and he with his wife and clerk took passage for St. Thomas, where he

is at the present time awaiting orders from the Government pending the solution of the present war. A letter recently received from Mrs. Hanna states that they expect to go back very soon.

I was quite pleased with my brief visit to this pleasant little city and took quite a number of views, some of which will appear later on in my diary.

One which is of interest at this time is the



A Coffee Field.

Spanish warship Concha. This ship was doing patrol duty around the island. The view was taken from the deck of the steamship Arkadia, thereby giving another outline of the city and the business front.



An Improved Highway.

While on shore I also got a view of our own steamship Arkadia at anchor, showing as well the harbor looking westward.

Like nearly all the ports in the West Indies, the foreign shipping is despatched and re-

ceived from vessels lying in the stream at anchor, but there is a good wharf at San Juan for smaller vessels, a view of which is shown.

The Governor General's palace of Ponce de Leon is now used by the Government for other



An Improved Highway.

purposes and a newer and more modern building for that purpose is now in use, as shown in the illustration.

At the time of my visit the office was vacant, but a new Governor General was momentarily expected and he arrived a few days after my departure.

In a very pretty square there is a Columbus monument, erected in 1892. Like all Spanish cities, San Juan has a plaza, but it is uninteresting, there being no fountain or flowers—simply a square with conveniences for rest



Columbus Monument, San Juan.

in the way of settees and chairs. The plaza is surrounded by prominent buildings, one of which is shown herewith. It is used as a post-office and for other Government purposes.

The streets, as before mentioned, are quite neat and some of them unusually pretty. A sample view is given.

CHAPTER IV.

THE capital, San Juan, was the first principal occupation of the island and has been since the principal point of attack in all of the wars and invasions of the past. In



Improved Highway winding through the Mountains.

1595 it was sacked by Drake, and in 1598 by the Duke of Cumberland.

In 1615 Hendrick, a Dutchman, lost his life in an attack on the Castle Del Mono. The attempt of the English in 1678 was equally unsuccessful, and Abercrombie in 1797 made



Section of Improved Highway.

a landing east of the city and attempted to subdue it from the land side.

He was defeated at the eastern extremity of the old city wall and had to retire after a three days' siege. Had he been successful

and the island brought under the sway of the Anglo-Saxon, what a garden it might be at this time! In conversation with residents in



Landscape between Caguas and Cayey.

both San Juan and Ponce, many seemed to regret that Abercrombie had not succeeded.

One cannot view the vast system of fortifications and walls without thinking of the human agony and misery which was forced to create it all. All through the centuries that

these fortifications were being erected it was under Spanish rule and with slavery at its worst.

Slavery was not abolished until 1873, and



A Roadside Dream.

most of the laboring classes, both negroes and mixed blood, were slaves up to that time. This island has always been the pet of the home Government. It is free from debt, and,

being too small for an insurrection to gain much force, it has usually been peaceful and quiet.

The fertility of the soil is such that large



Landscape between Cayey and Aibonito.

exports of their leading crops have enabled the people to import what was necessary for their comfort and happiness to a greater degree than in Cuba.

On the day following our arrival I started before daybreak in the rain to drive over that great pride of the people, the improved highway from the capital to Ponce, a distance of eighty miles. The road is macadam, built



River bed, Rio Portuguese, near Ponce.

with trap rock, and is a splendid feat of engineering in the way it winds through the mountains, passing through Rio Piedras Guaynabo, Aguas Buenos, Caguas, Cayey, Aibonito, Coamo and Juan Diaz. The scenery is charming throughout the whole distance.



Mineral Spring Bathing Establishment in outskirts of Ponce.

Two landscape views were taken which will give an idea of the lofty mountains and also the tropical side of it. The entire distance is made in thirteen hours.

There is a coach with the mails which can be taken, but the more common method and the one I adopted is to engage a driver with a span of horses, which are of native breed and about half the size of our ordinary horses in the States. They are wonderful little

animals to climb the hills and also are fleet of foot. The drivers, however, abuse them unmercifully and beat them nearly the whole distance.

We changed five times on the trip, which takes about two hours; hence the passage is really but eleven hours, or an average speed of something over seven miles an hour.

At frequent intervals along the way are small stations, at each of which there is a



Market View, Ponce.

building which may be termed a combination of grocery store and wayside inn. The usual loungers are found at all such places, and they are an uncouth, disagreeable set. Around these stopping places the filth is beyond de-



The Market Place, Ponce.

scription. A fair type of this sort of highway tavern is given.

There are exceptions here and there to such miserable, dirty places, one of which was at a halt in the mountains, where a woman dis-

pensed food and light drinks to travelers. This place is reached after a weary ride up a very long incline and is a convenient and pleasant spot to rest the horses.



The Market, Ponce.

Cayey is a pretty inland city, about half way between the capital and Ponce. Here we stopped for dinner, and a good one it proved, at a reasonable price, \$1.00 Porto Rican, equal to sixty cents American. Here a fellow-



A Street Corner, Ponce.

traveler, who was also a passenger with me on the steamer and who had been studying medicine in Philadelphia, bade me good-bye, his route diverging to Arroyo, his old home. The road from now on was through charming scenery; the turns and winds through the mountains were something wonderful. The view from every point of observation disclosed tobacco fields, coffee and banana groves, all varieties of the palm, including the cocoanut,

the lowlands covered with sugar cane or filled with large herds of cattle, the road on either side rich with all forms of tropical growth. The slopes of the mountains remind one somewhat of Switzerland in summer. At



Residence of the German Consul, Mr. Fritze, Ponce.

Aibonito we gave our little horses a needed rest. At this place there is a beautiful cathedral which I attempted to capture in my camera, but without success. At Coamo another change of horses. The raising of tobacco in this locality is quite prominent. While waiting here I found an old wizened-up



Fire Department, Ponce.

St. Croix man who could speak English. He was greatly astonished to find that I was but two years older than himself and talked in Spanish much about it to bystanders. The old rat, he certainly looked aged enough for my grandfather. With fresh horses we fairly flew down the mountain, the same beautiful scenery all along the route. We changed teams once more in the country and it was a poor exchange, the horses being all fagged out



The Plaza, Ponce.

by the time we reached Juana Diaz. Our last five miles was made under the whip. The cruelty of these drivers is something terrible and would not be permitted outside of Spanish



The Plaza, Ponce.

dominions. I arrived in Ponce at 7 P. M., and put up at the Hotel Français, kept by one Juan Bettolacci and wife. She speaks broken English and was quite a help to me from my first entrance. The distance driven that day

was eighty miles with five changes of horses. How I wish the opponents of good highways had been with me to see the wonderful pike



The Plaza, Ponce.

over which I came! This highway is certainly the best piece of road I have ever driven on and is kept in perfect repair by a most thorough system.

CHAPTER V.

PONCE lies about three miles inland from the south coast. It is not as handsome a city as the capital. Its public buildings are frequently of brick, stone or stucco, but many of the private houses are of wood. It is lighted by gas, and at the time of my visit an American company was about to erect an electric lighting plant.

The few days I spent in Ponce were replete with enjoyment. The first to engage my attention was La Playa (the bay), which is about three miles from the city proper and is a small city in itself. Notwithstanding a poor harbor, the business done from this port is large and increasing. The principal business houses export sugar, molasses, coffee and tobacco, and import flour, lumber, provisions, coal, etc. The exports of coffee by one firm, in the year 1897, were three millions of dollars. The harbor is, as before remarked, a poor one, without wharves. All vessels, steam and sail,

are obliged to take in and discharge cargo while at anchor through lighters. I took in twice a famous drive from Ponce northerly in the



Cathedral, Ponce.

direction of Adjuntas, where for nine miles the road is improved and is fully equal to the great highway from the capital to Ponce. Along this highway one witnesses the same charming scenery and tropical foliage as on

the longer drive from San Juan to Ponce, with a better class of houses. The latter on the long drive are not to be considered as houses outside of the villages, but are simply thatch



Cemetery, Ponce.

roofs supported by poles and entirely open on all sides.

While the city is small, yet I did not tire in the days spent there going through its quaint and narrow streets, visiting the market early in the morning, riding the outskirts to a

famous mineral bath, where the bather utilizes a quaint stone bath tub. The water is blood warm and pumped by a windmill. (Had Ponce de Leon known of this delicious spring



Opera House, Ponce.

he need not have gone to Florida in search of the fountain of youth.)

Visiting plaza, cathedral, cemetery, making business and social calls, etc.,—every day filled with golden hours of blissful rest. As I pen these fragments *in re* Porto Rico my thoughts

dwell lovingly on this fair daughter of the Caribbee, and my optimistic nature is nursing a hope that her future may be made radiant and glorious under some new dispensation as



Commercial Street, Ponce.

a recompense for past sufferings under unjust and cruel misrule.

My correspondent at Ponce, Mr. Hugo C. Fritze, gave me a rare treat one day in a ride to the well-known Mercedita sugar estate. This plantation is one of the most promi-

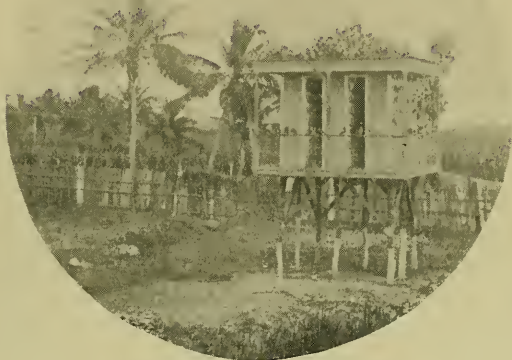
ment on the island, embracing about 4,000 acres, employing 1,800 persons, and entirely devoted to the cultivation of sugar-cane. I was fortunate in getting a few good views here,



Centrifugal Sugar Factory, Mercedita Estate, near Ponce.

but could not get an interior of the sugar factory, which I hope someone later on will attempt. The sugar turned out at the Mercedita is of the highest grade of centrifugal. The residuum, or low grade molasses, which

comes from this process is too poor to export, in fact it would have no market value in the States, but is utilized here by distilling it into what is called "nigger rum," being very low



Dove House at Sugar Factory, near Ponce.

grade and sold at a correspondingly low price. It might be said at this time that notwithstanding the cheapness of rum and the fact that those who sell it pay but a small license, I did not see a drunken person in the ten

days which I remained on the island. I was told, however, that at the holiday period between Christmas and New Year's there was much drunkenness among the common people.



Hauling Sugar Cane, Mercedita Estate, near Ponce.

I also visited the Laurel sugar factory, where Muscovada sugar is made. The molasses from this sugar is the celebrated Fancy Ponce, nearly all of which is shipped from this factory to New Haven. While the producing of sugar and other products of the island is in

the hands of Spaniards, or Porto Ricans, yet the large commercial transactions, such as the



Muscovada Sugar Factory, "The Laurel," near Ponce.

handling of the crops for export, is mostly done by foreigners.

I took a most delightful ride with a Mr. Santori, a Frenchman, but who speaks English

fluently. His vehicle was a New Haven phaeton, made by Demarest. He told me that the duty on that carriage was over \$200. All



On the road, Ponce to La Playa.

articles imported from other countries other than Spain, whether a necessity or a luxury, are subject to heavy duties, and that a people can show a comparative prosperity under such a burden of taxation speaks volumes for the



Improved Highway between Ponce and Adjuntas.

future possibilities of this snug little island under another flag than Spain's. And if it ever comes to pass that the Anglo-Saxon should



Street at the Bay, Ponce.

come into control it might become a veritable paradise.

One thing very noticeable in the foliage of nearly every tree is that there are no dead leaves. When a leaf has reached its maturity and done its full duty, it is simply pushed off



La Playa, Ponce, S. S. Arkadia in the background.

by the new bud, remaining green until it falls. Nearly every vegetable known to civilization can be raised here. I visited a small grist-mill where native corn was being ground, and a most excellent article of meal was the product. Upland rice grows thriftily, Irish potatoes, white beans and red are grown without trouble. The fruit is most delicious,



Harbor of Ponce.



Coopering Molasses for Shipment, La Playa, Ponce.

especially the banana and orange. The former is one of the principal articles of food, being cooked in the green state as well as eaten ripe, and the quantity which can be grown is beyond computation. I do not believe it to be possible, should this island be cut off from all communication with the outside world, that the inhabitants could be starved out, as they have all the food at their own doors necessary to sustain life. I at-

tempted, without success, a view of a famous tree in the outskirts of Ponce, of the variety called Savior. This tree has probably fifty small trunks surrounding the main body, all formed by the branches growing downward and catching hold of the soil, and thus forming a new root. This tree is said to be older than the discovery of the island by Columbus. Its position by the roadside and on the banks of the river Rio Portugues, which we forded, makes it an attractive object. Though I missed in my snap at this wonderful native at short range, I caught it at another time when taking the river-bed, and it will be noticed on a small scale in that cut in the background.



Loading Molasses into Lighters, Ponce.

CHAPTER VI.

THE common people of Porto Rico, which means the blacks and mixed races, are as a rule docile and honest. They work faithfully though not rapidly. Their wants are few, and it is well that they can live on a small income, as the pay of the common laborer is but about twenty to twenty-five dollars (Porto Rico) per month and board themselves. Under a better form of government they could enjoy more privileges, especially one that is now practically denied them, that is, education and the benefits of religion. I was informed by a gentleman on the island, who is a large commission merchant, that the Church until quite recently has paid but small attention to the poor. Until a comparatively recent period the marriage rite among this class has not been regarded. The people have been too poor to secure a priest, whether for marriage or death, but following the abolition of slavery in 1873, the government at Madrid has sanc-

tioned marriage by an officer of the law. This became necessary, as no matter how poor the people are, occasionally there may be one in a community who will accumulate property, hence his children must be legitimized for legal inheritance. My informant and his wife, whom I had the pleasure of meeting at a Spanish breakfast, spoke with great regret of the past and the present condition of the poor, but they were optimistic in their views and had great hopes that in the future more attention would be paid to this class. In the interior of the island, that is to say, outside of the cities, the illiteracy is claimed to be ninety-seven per cent. It speaks well for a people who for centuries have been degraded by slavery and denied the ordinary privileges of civilization, that they are as good as they are. If the Anglo-Saxon could have sway for a generation or two on this island, what a wonderful change would come over it! In the cities the better class follow in close imitation the Spanish customs as regards social life, religion and mode of living. Sunday afternoon is the holiday of the week, as all business

houses keep open during Sunday forenoon. Sunday evening the people gather in the Plaza and exchange courtesies ; the ladies flirt



A Boat Landing, Ponce.

their fans and gossip, while the government band plays until ten o'clock.

The bicycle is there and many of the Spaniards are enthusiastic riders, but the women do not use the wheel. Spanish exclusion for the fair sex holds sway here as in other Spanish countries. I suspect, however, that if the

female tourist should ever come into the island in force, that the Spanish girls would be attempting to ride on the sly. A few years ago a French syndicate entered into a contract to build a narrow-gauge railroad around the island, touching at all of the various ports. It was but partially built, a few sections only, when the syndicate failed and in derision the people call it the "Petite Panama." I saw no tourists during my stay and I understood that very few visit the island. Should they ever invade it, new hotels with more modern appliances than are now in existence would become necessary. All this will come whenever an improvement is made in the administration of affairs.

CHAPTER VII.

THE population of the island is quite dense, there being probably 200,000 in cities and 700,000 in the country. From general information I believe there are fewer paupers and criminals on the island than in New Haven County alone, but I have no statistics to prove it. I was informed by all with whom I spoke on the subject that the entire island was quite free from crime and that one could ride by night or day all over the island without fear of molestation. I had supposed before my visit that the majority of the people were black, but from my observation I was led to the conclusion that the proportion of blacks is not more than one-fourth, with perhaps one-fourth Spanish or direct descendants. The other half are mixed, and such a mixture! There yet remains the blood of the old original Indian stock. Ponce de Leon and his successors did not exterminate all. This native

stock has largely become mixed with the negroes and the Spanish and other nationalities. Many that are called mulattoes or mixed seem to be as white as those who pose as Spaniards. The descendants of the Indian stock are the better class of laborers. They have thin lips and thin noses and are considered the best farmers, always seeming kind to one another and making an effort to do the best they know how in all things. The intelligent classes all seemed proud of their island home, but mourned over the injustice of the mother country in her unjust laws for the government of the people, excessive taxation and the unsettled state of the currency. Considerable talk was indulged in as to autonomy, which was to be voted on the month following my visit. The people mostly were favorable towards it, but were opposed to some features, especially where Spain is to keep a standing army and have the appointment of all the higher officials.

The condition of the currency was most deplorable. The fluctuations were constant and always for the benefit of the wealthy or



A Street in Mayaguez.

the forehanded. The poor man's wages were fixed. The advance in the gold premium simply compelled him to pay more for the necessities of life without any corresponding increase in his pay, which under like conditions are the same the world over. The day I arrived at the capital I sold my American gold for 70 premium. A few days later it was at 73. I left Ponce via steamer on January 24th, with regret, and arrived at Mayaguez on Tuesday, January 25th.

Mayaguez on the west coast is also situated several miles inland and is separated from its port by a river. An iron bridge was constructed, however, about 1875. This town has military barracks, clubs and gas works. The harbor, accessible only to vessels drawing less than sixteen feet, is silting up, as indeed is the case with almost all the harbors of Porto Rico. I here received many courtesies from the hands of the United States Consular Agent, Mr. Badreni, and his clerk, a young man by the name of Drake, an American. In company with others I rode from the city far into the outskirts. I took some very inter-

esting snaps with my camera, one of which I present under the title of "A Porto Rico Cupid," not because it is unusual, but because it is the custom of nearly all of the small boys and of many girls, too, among the poor, not



A Street Scene, Mayaguez. Pig in the basket.

only in the country but in the outskirts of the cities, to roam through the streets without clothing. He was a noble little fellow and seemed to have no black blood in him, his hair being blonde and his form fit for a sculptor's model. After making business calls I cleared with the steamer once more for the

capital, where we arrived on the morning of January 26th. We spent the day here, clearing in the evening for New York. Our voyage on the return was very tempestuous and we were over nine days in making it, passing through the latter part of it in a gale with quite a blizzard, and although the experience was disagreeable in the extreme, yet I felt satisfied withal, having all my life been desirous of witnessing just what we passed through.

CHAPTER VIII.

HAVING commenced my narrative in a somewhat rapturous mood, over love for the ocean, I will close by extracts from my diary, showing how the old monarch paid me back in bad coin.

Jan. 29th. Three days after leaving San Juan the weather became cooler, air and water both 68°. Heavy sea. Ship rolling. Barometer falling. It would seem that we are on the edge of a gale. Captain Lloyd does not like the look ahead. The ship's carpenter, who is like many other sailors of the superstitious sort, claims to have experienced when at the island a bad dream in which he saw a horse standing over him, by which sign he feared the return voyage would be fraught with trouble, as he never yet dreamed of a horse but bad weather or disaster followed. Ship making little headway and the passage destined to be a long one unless better conditions soon prevail.

Jan. 30th. Rough sea. Ship rolling heavily. A very bad day. According to the cap-



Street Scene, Mayaguez. Cupid.

tain's log we are in a gale. Air 60°, water 68° temperature.

Jan. 31st. Monday. Rain and high wind, from sou'east to nor'west. Very rough sea. Air and water both 63° temperature. No observation. By dead reckoning latitude 33.22, longitude 70.46. The captain has asked the carpenter to rope his horse and throw him overboard, else we would be obliged to do as was done with Jonah. He answered "If I were as good a man as Jonah I would be willing to be thrown into the water." This day long to be remembered, all through the hours from sunrise to sunset a fearful gale. Old ocean ran wild. As far as the eye could reach water mountains rose higher and higher. When at the limit the mighty wind would cut their topmost crests and great sheets of water scattered like chaff. Now and then the sun would emerge from the clouds to witness the great struggle and seemed to look with a kindly pity on our little ship, a mere speck amid the raging conflict. Following these great and ever-increasing waves would come a sudden rainfall, always preceded by a short increased wind force, reminding one of the land when a thunder storm comes up suddenly.

After the rain the waves are smoother but the swell of the ocean increases, on which the ship dances like a cork. This is followed by the waves again breaking out, the wind increases



The Pilot leaves us, Mayaguez.

and if at first it whistled, now it roars and bellows and shrieks. The waves answer back, "You cannot blow down that little object, for in vain have you tried, but we will engulf it." Now comes a trial of Nature's forces with the art of man. Over and over and again our

good ship is driven to the summit of the highest peaks from which the eye can survey other mountains, with great and awful cañons reaching between, on which apex she stalks like a deer at bay, and with a mighty, almost superhuman effort, crushes down the barrier, the breaking waves vying for supremacy, until with a shiver at every bolt she drops into the valley below, rolling and writhing like a wounded human soul, only to commence the ascent of other heights more terrible and more disheartening. All through the daylight this conflict goes on. Will its termination be witnessed by this little company, is a thought which passes through my mind frequently. Will the setting sun leave us his blessing and the moon drive away the mighty disturbance round about us? We are not given time to even hope for the best, for as night settles on the angry giant he surged and raved like unto the curses of hell's unnumbered fiends. Owing to the continuance of the gale in early night the captain changed the ship's course four points east and put the engine to half speed,—this in the hope that the gale might

subside by morning. What will that morning be? Certain it will find us many miles from our course.

Feb. 1st. The weather was cold and with a continuance of the gale, somewhat lessened,



New York Harbor after passing Quarantine Feb. 4, 1898.

but severe enough. By observation this day we had made but ninety miles in the twenty-four hours. We are all a bit discouraged, both passengers and crew. The captain cheers us up by saying that there is plenty of coal and provisions. The carpenter reports that we are

clear of the fore-legs of the dream-horse but the hind legs are yet in the path. This night was bad enough. With the ship wave-washed and gasping in her mighty struggle a fog set in, necessitating blowing the whistle. The blowing of a fog whistle for hours in the night during a violent gale in winter on the North Atlantic, four hundred miles from the nearest coast, is a mighty nerve-disturber. I did not sleep well.

Wednesday, Feb. 2d. The force of the gale has spent its fury, but the water is far from smooth.

Feb. 3d. A glorious day. Sun shines. Wind moderating. Air and water very cold. Captain informs us that we are but 102 miles from Sandy Hook and expects to land us Friday morning, at which there is great rejoicing by the young Porto Rican passengers, and as we gaily sail along, the vista of the carpenter's horse floats silently down the dark blue waters of the gulf stream. The captain resumes his old-time smile, the two mates lose their tired look, the purser, now that he finds a steady table to complete his manifest, is happy, the

stewardess has given an extra smooth to my stateroom and in fact, I may say, the goose hangs high. At five p. m., last dinner aboard ship, eating of which was a pleasure by reason of the quiet sea. At eleven a. m. we drop anchor at quarantine.

Feb. 4th. I take my last snap shots. The proof of one represents the lower harbor of New York after passing quarantine. Floating ice was quite a wonderful sight to a young Porto Rican bride, who had never been outside of the tropics before.

APPENDIX.

A few days after my return from Porto Rico the strained relations previously existing between the United States and Spain became more intense by reason of the blowing up of the U. S. Man of War Maine, in the harbor of Havana, Feb. 15th. April 20th, President McKinley sent his ultimatum to Spain; war preparatious now began with vigor. The first great naval victory of Admiral Dewey at Manila, May 1st, set the country ablaze with excitement and then came short and successful campaigns in Cuba and Porto Rico, followed soon after by peace, Spain having accepted the demands of President McKinley, August 10th, by which she agrees to cede the island of Porto Rico to the United States. All praise and honor to President McKinley, the Army and the Navy; felicitations to our new-found sister of the Antilles. I predict a great and glorious future for this southern star. The little red school-house can now be



Fort Morro, N. W. Angle, San Juan.





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